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Mr. *DONGWORTH's*

ASSIZE-SERMON

Preach'd at

LINCOLN.

Mr. DONKWORTH's

ASSIZE-SERMON

Preach'd at

LINCOLN.

The Neceſſity of Reformation:

AN

ASSIZE-SERMON

Preach'd in the

Cathedral Church of St. *MARY*

IN

LINCOLN.

On *JULY* 28. 1707.

By *RICHARD DONGWORTH*, A. M.
Vicar of *Long Owersby.*

Publiſh'd at the Requeſt of *Matthew Boucheret*, Eſq; the High-Sheriff, ſome of the Grand Jury, and ſeveral other Gentlemen.

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DEUT. V. 29.

Oh, that there were such an Heart in them, that they would Fear me, and keep all my Commandments always; that it might be well with them, and with their Children for ever.

THESE are the Words of GOD himself to *Moses*, the Chief Captain and Judge of the Children of *Israel*, his Peculiar People; in which, he expresses a passionate Desire of their Happiness, with the Means effectually to promote and secure it. And they concern, not only every Particular *Israelite*, as to his Private Welfare, but the Whole Body or Nation of them, as to their Publick Good: And not only *That* People, (to whom were more especially made the Promises of Temporal Happiness upon their doing well,) but also *All* the People of God, in all Times and Places, unto the End of the World.

Oh then that there were such an Heart in us, that we would Fear God, and keep all his Commandments always; that so doing, *it might be well with us, and with our Children for ever.*

From which Words, I shall take Occasion to shew, That it is the Duty and Interest of every one of us, to do what we can to promote the Common Welfare, by being Just and Good in our own Lives, and endeavouring all that is possible to make others so too in theirs:

But more eſpecially thoſe in any Public Place or Station; as they are commanded, and as it is neceſſarily requir'd of them that have the more immediate Care and Concern of the Public Welfare in their hands, and are the *Miniſters of God for Good, and Revengers to execute Wrath upon them that do Evil.*

We are to refrain from Vice and Iniquity our ſelves, from all Notorious Sins againſt God, and Injuries to Man, and contribute all we can to ſuppreſs or reform other Mens. The Reaſon and Neceſſity whereof, I ſhall more particularly urge from theſe Three Conſiderations.

I. Vice and Iniquity, more eſpecially when Notorious and Common, is a Diſhonour to God, a Reproach to our Religion, and a Diſcredit to the Government of this Nation.

II. It may provoke God to withdraw his Bleſſings from, and inflict his Judgments upon us.

III. It corrupts others, and makes the World ſtill worſe: and thereby will render our Repentance more difficult, and our Pardon harder to be obtain'd; in that we cannot well make Reparation to thoſe many Perſons whom we have injur'd here, and whoſe Souls we have eternally ruin'd; nor to the Public, whoſe Judgments we have haſten'd and aggravated.

I. Vice and Iniquity, more eſpecially when Notorious and Common, is a Diſhonour to God, a Reproach to our Religion, and a Diſcredit to the Government of this Nation.

1. It is a Diſhonour to God. To honour any one, is to ſay and do that which ſhows him to be valued and

and regarded by our ſelves, and cauſes him to be ſo by others. So the Scriptures make our good Works and Obedience a Teſt and Proof of our Honouring God, as our evil Doings are of the Contrary. *Let your Light ſo ſhine before Men, that they may ſee your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven. Matth.* 5. 16. And in that of the Prophet, *A Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Maſter: If then I be a Father, where is mine Honour? And if I be a Maſter, where is my Fear?* Mal. 1. 6. that is, your Honour and Fear of me, by Obedience to my Laws and Commands.

Our Vices and Iniquities are then a Diſhonour to God, in that, by trampling upon his Laws, deſpiſing his Authority, and abuſing his Goodneſs, they take off from the good, and bring a falſe or ill Eſteem of God, in the ſight of others, as well as argue ſuch in our ſelves. Whilſt we dare be openly and cuſtomarily Vicious and Unjuſt, by this we ſhow to others, either that we do not believe at all, that there is a God, or elſe we inſinuate falſe Notions of the Deity, that he is an inſignificant Being, who has not Wiſdom to know, Power to puniſh, nor Juſtice to recompence our Doings. And the more publickly we thus diſhonour God amongſt Mankind, the greater is our Sin. To provoke him ſecretly, by ſuch Sins as are known only to him and our own Conſciences, is but a Private Offence; but openly and frequently to do this our ſelves, and patiently ſee and ſuffer it to be done by others, is the greateſt Affront, and worſt of Crimes; which oft repeated deſerves no Pardon from injur'd Man, much leſs, from the Eternal and Almighty God, the Fountain of all Good, from whom we derive our very Beings, with all Temporal and

and Spiritual Blessings, and who made us for this very End and Purpose, that we should Glorify and Honour him.

2. Our Publick and Prevailing Vices and Iniquities are also a Reproach to our Holy Religion. Thus St. *Paul* argues with him who professes a Holy Religion, and yet leads a corrupt Life; that he dishonours God, and also his Religion. *Thou that makest thy Boast of the Law, through breaking of the Law dishonourest thou God? For the Name of God is blasphem'd amongst the Gentiles thro' you.* Rom. 2. 23. For us to pretend to be directed by such Rules and Patterns as our most excellent Religion proposes, and to be mov'd by those weighty Arguments and Encouragements it gives, and yet not perform the least of these Pretensions, is a very Indecent and an Evil Thing.

If our Lives and Manners be grosly corrupted and debauch'd, and we shew no regard of Piety to God, of Justice to Man, or Sobriety to our selves, we must necessarily be a Reproach to our Profession, or a Scandal to all the sober and wiser part of Mankind. We must not think to deceive the World, by a bare and empty Title and Shadow of Christianity. No. For either Men will conclude us to be egregious Hypocrites, or our Religion to be Wicked and Unholy. And which way soever it be, it is very bad.

If we be Hypocrites and Dissemblers, as all are who pretend to and profess Christ's Religion, and yet perform not the Duties, nor avoid the Sins therein commanded and forbidden, we bring upon our selves the just Scorn and Derision of Mankind; and at last, a heavier Doom, the Portion of Hypocrites, in that miserable Place, where is Weeping, Wailing, and Gnashing of Teeth,

Teeth, a Worm that never dies, and a Fire not to be quench'd.

Or, on the other Hand, If thro' our vicious Lives they take us for Profeſſors of a baſe and unholy Religion, This is to bring the greateſt Reproach upon the Goſpel Inſtitution. It encourages weak Chriſtians in Ignorance and Impiety. Some amongſt us therefore continue Wicked, with hopes of Impunity, becauſe others that ſhould be Wiſer and Better go on boldly in their Sins. And as Chriſtians do hereby abuſe, ſo the Infidels do deſpiſe our Religion, and are deterr'd from embracing it. The Terms of Salvation offer'd in the Goſpel would be ſooner accepted by the unconverted World, if we who are its Profeſſors, would always ſpeak and act according to its Rules and Injunctions. Numbers of Souls might be brought over to the Faith of Chriſt, if many that call themſelves Chriſtians did not hinder their Converſion, by being Stumbling-Blocks, and Rocks of Offence to them, through their Prophane and Immoral Lives.

And when Inquiſition ſhall be made for the Blood of Souls, what ſhall we ſay, who have not only openly affronted our Saviour and his Laws, and declar'd by our own Wickedneſs, that in deſpite of what he could do for us, we would not be ſav'd, and ſo ruin'd our ſelves Eternally; but alſo, have occaſion'd the everlaſting Perdition of many others Souls, by the Scandal and Reproach, the Contempt and Prejudice, that thro' us hath been taken by them againſt our moſt holy Faith and pure Religion?

3. But ſtill further, Vice and Iniquity, when open and common, is not only a Diſhonour to God, and a Reproach to the Chriſtian Religion in general, but alſo a Diſ-

a Discredit to the Government of this Nation and Church of *England* in particular. We do pretend, and I humbly presume, very justly too, to be guided and governed by as good Laws, both in Church and State, as any Nation in the Universe; but our ways of Living would often prove the contrary, being the Reverse of what we are urg'd, and should be oblig'd to.

☞ " The *State* takes Care both of the Preservation of our " Temporal Rights and Properties, and has also provided " many Laws against the Publick and Prevailing Sins of " the Times; which would be of good Use, were they " duly and prudently executed. But if the Laws lie a- " sleep, or be wrested and abus'd, they then become the " Injury or Reproach of our Constitution. If the Invader of Right, the Sower of Discord, the notoriously Vicious and Prophane, should pass with Impunity, or without Discouragement, it would manifestly tend to the Reproach and Prejudice of the best form'd Society or Government in the World.

And as for the *Church of* England, both in Purity of Doctrine, and Uprightness of Manners, she justly challenges the Preeminence of any since the Apostolical Times; and is now deservedly esteem'd the Bulwark of the Reformation. But thro' the Wickedness of some of her Professors, her Enemies take Occasion unjustly to revile her, and think her to espouse or allow those things, which are to her true Sons an Abomination. It is a thing not to be denied, much to be deplor'd, God alone knows when to be remedied, that we want the Primitive Discipline; and are therefore defective in Power, to Censure, Punish, and Reform the *Workers of Iniquity*. For as we do not approve of nor avow, so could we but prevent any Notorious Sinners from being

being amongſt us, we ſhould then appear in our Native Beauty, and be more clearly ſeen to maintain nothing but what is pure and blameleſs. If our Practices did but correſpond and agree with our Principles, then we ſhould both increaſe our Repute with the Reformed Churches abroad, and gain more upon thoſe ſeveral Sectaries at home. Whereas, the too great Sins of too many of us, (and there will be ſome looſe and corrupt Members in every great Body) are made a Pretence of hindring ſome from entring or returning into the Boſom of our Church, and cauſing others to forſake it. Such Wicked and Undutiful Children are a Grievance, a Reproach, and Injury to their Mother; and in a great Meaſure, the Occaſion of thoſe many Schiſms and Diviſions which rent and diſturb our Peace, at leaſt, amongſt thoſe Unthinking or Deſigning People, who out of Prejudice or Intereſt, will have as little Charity for us, as they have more and greater Vices in themſelves, proportionably conſider'd to their Numbers.

II. Vice and Iniquity, more eſpecially when Public and Prevailing, may provoke God to withdraw his Bleſſings from, and inflict his Judgments upon us.

The greater are God's Mercies and Bleſſings, the more Ingratitude and Injuſtice is there in the Abuſe of them, and the higher the Affront and Provocation. And God's Mercies towards us are very great. For we of this Nation enjoy all the Benefits and Advantages, that any under the Heavens could wiſh, and more than any can reaſonably hope for or pretend to. For Scituation, Soil, Climate, Religion, Government, and Commodities neceſſary for Humane Life, all conſider'd to-

gether, our Country will outvie any other in the World. And for the more immediate Blessings of God's Right Hand upon us, in Peace and War, in our Prosperity and Successes both at Home and Abroad, more especially now, under Her Majesties most Auspicious Government, we are admir'd, or envy'd, by all other People. With the Glory and Renown of the *British* Arms in Foreign, we reap the happy Effects of them in our own Country. We enjoy our Religion and Rights, live in Peace and Plenty, under our own *Vines and Fig-trees*, whilst most other Nations of *Europe* are groaning under the miserable Devastations of bloody and expensive Wars. And we have all Humane Security for a Continuance of these Blessings, and of ever being a great and happy People, if we can but be *United* in our Affections, and will strive in nothing more than this, who shall serve God best, and most promote the Public Good. But our Sins and Divisions, are those, and those only things, which will separate us from God, and from one another.

God that made the World, does as surely govern and rule in it, as any Prince in his Kingdom. And every State and Society fares either better or worse in this World, as they excel in Virtue and Religion, or abound in Vice and Impiety. I need not go about to prove a Divine Providence; from Reason, from the Universal Testimony of all Ages and Nations, from the Events that happen in the World, from Authentic Declarations of it in Holy Scripture, or from other, or the like Arguments: We have here I hope no Scepticks in this Matter, but are all fully satisfied in and assur'd of this Truth, that, God (who Reigns in the World, with infinite Power, and perfect Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness,

neſs, who takes Notice of all particular Perſons, and the moſt minute Affairs, who *numbers the Hairs of our Head*, and without whoſe Will *not a Sparrow falls to the Ground*,) does in a more eſpecial manner concern himſelf in the Publick Affairs and Concernments of Nations and Kingdoms, and does bleſs them with Happineſs and Proſperity, accordingly as they *fear him and keep his Commandments*. So it muſt be, from the Juſtice of Divine Providence, and ſo it has been, and ever will be, we are told, in the Hiſtories of all Nations, and by the many and frequent Inſtances of God's Dealing with his People.

The Sacred Story fully and plainly ſhows, that the Proſperity or Adverſity of Nations was according to their Publick and Prevailing Goodneſs or Sins. God's own People were always openly afflicted, or in a Proſperous State and Condition, according as they generally behav'd themſelves towards God, and obſerv'd his Laws. When they were Good and Righteous before God, then was it that they proſper'd in the Land; but when once they had forſaken their God, or were corrupt before him, then was it that he deliver'd them into their Enemies hand, or into ſome other Calamity. And in their Affliction and Diſtreſs, no ſooner did they cry and turn to the Lord, but he did hear and help them. To deſcend to Particulars.

Publick and Prevailing Wickedneſs, and a General Corruption of Mankind, was the Cauſe of the Flood, in the days of *Noah*. Thoſe that were before drench'd in the Floods of Sin, and in the Common Stream of Wickedneſs, were afterwards drown'd in a Deluge of Waters. This was the occaſion of thoſe Showers of Fire and Brimſtone, upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*. Thoſe

that were first inflam'd with Lust and Sensuality, were afterwards burn'd with Fire from Heaven. Hence was it, that when the *Iniquity* of the *Amorites was full*, their Lands and Inheritances were given in Possession to others. For this Reason was it, that the Children of *Israel* in time of the *Judges*, were so oft oppres'd and overwhelm'd with Misery from their Neighbouring Powers. And as *Samuel* foretold them, upon their changing this for a Kingly Government, *If they would still do wickedly, they should be consum'd both they and their King*, 1 Sam. 12. 25. So it was, that after a large Series of Sins and Calamities, when their Iniquity was got to its heighth, the Country of *Israel* was invaded by the *Assyrians*, and themselves carried Captives in the Reign of *Hoshea*: And that of *Judah* not long after, in *Zedekiah*'s Reign, shar'd in the like Fate, their City of *Jerusalem* and Temple utterly destroy'd, their Country possess'd by Strangers, and themselves led in Captivity unto *Babylon*. And after Seventy Years, that it pleas'd God to restore them, their Wickedness would not let them many Ages enjoy their Prosperity; but when the *Lord of Life* appear'd and was Conversant among them, as he threaten'd and foretold their final Destruction, for the rejecting and abuse of his Mercies; so it came to pass, that not long after they had Crucify'd the Saviour of Mankind, the *Romans* came, and took away their Place and Nation, burn'd down their second City and Temple, wasted their Country, and did totally ruin and destroy them. So that they have been ever since, a dispers'd and despis'd People, among all Nations and Countries of the World.

Thus no doubt, has it been, and will be, with Christian Countries; that according to their Publick and Pre-

Prevailing Goodneſs or Iniquity, is their Happineſs or Miſery. And this Procedure of the Divine Diſpenſations, ſeems to us very juſt and reaſonable. For every Private Perſon, being in his own Nature made to live for ever; ſhall be anſwerable for his Actions, as a Private Perſon, not in this, but in another World; and there receive his juſt Puniſhment or Reward. But a Public Society or Community, as ſuch, having its End in this World, its prevailing Good or Evil will be here recompens'd accordingly, with a Proſperous, or Calamitous State and Condition.

And ſo it is indeed, that every Man being a Member of the Body Politic, a Part of the Public, (it is many Ones that make a Multitude) his openly good and virtuous Actions muſt contribute to the Public Welfare. But when the Numbers of Men increaſe ſo in Wickedneſs, that the moſt of them are bad, then is it they make their Nation ripe for Deſtruction. And ſo, when it is ſaid, a Nation is good or is bad, it is to be underſtood of the Generality of that Nation, which ſhall fare according to its general Practices and Cuſtoms, whether Good or Evil. Thus the Sinner partakes of the Happineſs, and the Righteous ſhares in the Miſeries, of the Public Community. *At what Inſtant*, ſays God, by the Prophet, *I ſhall ſpeak concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and pull down, and deſtroy it; If that Nation*, (that is, the Generality of that Nation) *againſt whom I have pronounc'd, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil I thought to do unto them. And at what Inſtant, I ſhall ſpeak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to build, and to plant it: If it do evil in my ſight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I ſaid I would benefit them.* Jer. 18. 7, 8, 9, 10.

All

All particular Persons then, as Members of the Public, should avoid Sin, as they tender their own, and also as they do respect the common Welfare. For it is not the Righteousness of a few Good and Devout Men, that will always secure the Public Peace. It may and does oft happen, that the great Governor of the World is Propitious to the Public, for the sake of a few; as he told *Abraham* of *Sodom*, that not *if fifty, forty or twenty, but if ten Righteous should be found there, he would save those Cities for tens sake.* Yet it is no presuming on this, whilst he has positively declar'd, by the Prophet, *That when a Land sins against him by trespassing grievously, then will he stretch out his hand upon it, and will break the staff of the Bread thereof, and will send noisome Beasts, Famine, the Sword, or Pestilence, upon it; and tho' these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver none but their own Souls by their righteousness.* Ezek. 14. 13, 14.

The best way then to preserve the Public Peace, and secure a Continuance of our Blessings, is, to reform our evil Practices, to *Fear God, and keep all his Commandments always;* otherwise he may be provok'd to turn our Blessings into a Curse, and remove from us to a more deserving People those Advantages we now enjoy. And what need there is of our utmost Endeavours for Amendment, that general Inundation of Sin, that overwhelms the whole Kingdom, is too plain and lamentable a Proof! Would every Man begin to reform what is amiss in himself, and take care of those committed to his Charge, this would contribute much to a general Reformation, and to the Public Good. But whilst Men are notoriously Prophane and Vicious, they are so much worse Enemies to our common Safety, in

that

that not only their own Sins add to the Heap and Number of the Public Stock, but that they actually by their Example draw others into Sin, or encourage and continue them therein. Which brings me to the

III. and Laſt Conſideration. Vice and Iniquity, more eſpecially when Notorious and Common, corrupts others, and makes the World ſtill worſe: And thereby will render our Repentance more difficult, and our Pardon harder to be obtain'd.

1. Our Prophaneneſs and Immoralities tend to a further Corruption of Mankind. Moſt Men love to act by Imitation, and therefore what is openly done by others, they think may be done by themſelves. Cuſtom and Example is that which gives ſtrength to Vice and Iniquity, and makes it reign with ſuch a ſovereign Sway in the World. For, what is generally practis'd is approv'd of, and Men think it a Diſgrace to act contrary to others, and to be ſingular; which though it do not hold in other Caſes, as in Wiſdom, Riches, or Honour, yet it does too much in this, of Sin and Iniquity. Men like not to be ſingular in Virtue, and to be good alone, but love to run with the Stream. Fear of Contempt added to their Inclination, which generally leads Men to that which is bad, makes them perfect Slaves to Cuſtom. And though there be never ſo good Laws, yet it is Example does moſt ſway and govern Men's Lives; for Precepts have nothing of the force of Precedents. We are not ſo much mov'd by what Men ſay, as by what they do; nor is it ſo well to be told the way, as to be taken by the hand and ſhown it. It is ſo both in good and evil; there is a great

great Argument and mighty Perswasion in Custom and Example: and the Corruption of the World is mostly owing to that.

" When Masters of Families, and others that have a
" greater and more Publick Charge, are remiss in them-
" selves, and those under their Care are neglected; This
" Neglect of them, with their Natural Proneness to Sin
" and Sloth, and the bad Examples of those that should
" be better Guides, must needs make them worse, and
" those that come from or after them, still more so: And
" thus Vice will necessarily be propagated, and the World
" made still worse than ever. It is a mighty Encou-
" ragement to those that are wickedly inclin'd, to persist
" in their Sins, when they see so many others sin with
" Courage, and as it were set Hell at Defiance. Compa-
" ny and Custom add Strength to their Madness and
" Folly.

But that is not all, that those who are bad, be encourag'd hereby to continue so; It does also very often draw aside them that are soberly inclin'd and educated. It must be a very firm and good Principle, and strong Resolutions, that can make a Man Proof against the Force and Power of such Temptations, as Custom, Ill Company, and Bad Examples. For Company insensibly infects, and the more frequently we converse with what is ill, the more weakned we are, and lose our Guard. One helps to infect another, and that other still more; so that I may not sin alone, but my sin may cause another to sin, and that other still others; and so on to several Persons, Times, and Places, sin spreads like a Contagion. From hence

2. Our

2. Our Repentance becomes more difficult, and our Pardon harder to be obtain'd; in that we cannot well recover or make Reparation to thoſe many Perſons we have ſeduc'd or corrupted, to the Ruin of their Souls; nor to the Publick, whoſe Judgments we have haſten'd and aggravated, by the Addition of our Sins, as its Members. When I have ſinned alone againſt God, upon my Senſe of, and hearty Sorrow for, and utter forſaking of my Sin, and changing my Life, my Pardon is eaſie and ſafe, through the Merits and Satisfaction of Chriſt; but when I have many other Men's Sins to repent of too, it is more difficult and dangerous. The Perſon I have drawn into Sin, by my Advice, Aſſiſtance, Encouragement, Example, or Connivance, may have drawn more; and thoſe ſtill many more: So that though I ſhould, (which is not always probable, nor poſſible,) convert ſome, or all thoſe that my ſelf had ſeduc'd, and been Partakers with in Sin, yet how know I when and where all thoſe Sins will ſtop, which are ſtill ſpreading from my firſt Commiſſion?

Now, in an Injury done to my Neighbour; before that God will pardon the Offence in it againſt himſelf, he requires, I ſhould make Reſtitution to, and Reconciliation with my Neighbour, that is primarily injur'd. This I ſay, that I muſt in ſome meaſure repair the Damage I do to my Neighbour's Body, Goods, or Name, before that God will forgive me: How much more then, ſhould I endeavour to recover the Loſs of, or repair the Injury done to, an Immortal Soul, or perhaps many Souls, to whoſe Eternal Ruin I may have been Inſtrumental? If the ſpoiling a Man's Goods, or tak-

ing away his Life, be so great an Evil, as hardly, or in some Cases not at all, to be recompens'd, how much heavier a Crime is it, and harder to be repented of, and forgiven, to be the Occasion of Men's everlasting Perdition and Misery? This made that Ancient Father St. *Augustine*, to pray so passionately, that God would forgive him his other Men's Sins.

And as the Crime is great, so will the Punishment rise in Proportion to it. It will be an Aggravation of that Man's Misery in another World, who not only has ruin'd his own Soul, notwithstanding the many Arguments, Obligations, and Advantages he had to the Saving it, but has also undone others with himself. They will horribly rage against, and curse him, and eternally howl for Vengeance upon him, for their Destruction. Thus the *Rich Man in Hell*, praying that *Lazarus* might be sent *to testify to his five Brethren* his Miseries, *that they might not come into that Place of Torments*, was not so much for their sakes, as his own. Not out of Charity (as we may suppose) to them, for we cannot think any such thing to be in the Dismal Place of the Damn'd; but it was, that they might not increase his Torments, through his having been Accessary to their Ruin.

And as to the Temporal Calamities of the Publick, if our Sins have added to the Heap, and so forwarded and increas'd our Judgments; What Reparation is to be, or can be made, for the Publick Injury and Disturbance, the Ruin of Families, the Loss of the Estates and Lives of our Friends and Countrymen? But this is a Nice and Dreadful Topic, of which I shall forbear to say any more.

I must

I must yet beg the Patience of this Honourable Audience, to make a short Application of what has been said, and then I shall conclude. And

1. To All in General.
2. To Those Particularly in a Publick Station and Capacity.

1. All and every of us are concern'd in the Duty enjoyn'd, and the Happiness thereupon promis'd, in the Text; and in what has now been said upon it. Every one of us should be sincere in the Practice of Piety and Virtue, and this will influence the Good and Happiness of others. This will render us good Christians, and good Churchmen, and will secure the good of the Publick, and our own best and greatest Good here and for ever. None of us; but, if we be hearty in the Business of Religion, may by our Endeavours and Examples, somewhat advance the Honour of God, and the Common Welfare. Those of us especially, that are now, or hereafter shall be, Masters or Mistresses of Families.

As every Kingdom is made up of many Families, so every Family is a little Kingdom; and would all concern'd, take a due Care of the Oeconomical, it would effectually tend to the Welfare of the Political Society. Would we neither neglect our selves, nor be careless of those under our Charge, our Children and Servants, to inform their Judgments, and regulate their Lives, the World would grow better, our own Families and their Posterity would be more Wise, Good, and Happy;

and the Quiet, Honour, and Interest of the Nation, would be more effectually secur'd and advanc'd.

And let every one of us, if we have any Zeal for God, for our excellent Church, and Holy Religion; if any Kindness for our Native Country; if any Concern for Thousands of guiltless Souls, that must suffer for the Nation's Sins; if any Compassion for our Children and our Children's Children; and if any Care to transmit to them our Religion, Rights, and Privileges; and at the last and general Judgment, to secure for our selves an Interest in Heaven; if we have Regard to any, or all these things, Let us *Fear God and keep all his Commandments always*, be careful to refrain from Vice and Iniquity our selves, and endeavour by all possible and prudent Means to suppress it in others.

2*dly*. All Those of you in any Public Station or Capacity, give me leave to say, YOU are, in a most especial manner, oblig'd by your Authority and Example, to maintain the Cause of God and your Countrey.

That *God*, by whom *Kings reign, and Magistrates decree Justice*, by whom *Princes rule, and all the Nobles and Judges of the Earth*, He has ordain'd, in the very Institution, Nature, and End of Magistracy, That *You* should be *for the Punishment of Evil doers, and the Praise of them that do well.*

You are dignify'd in Scripture with the Character of GODS, and in the Administration of Justice, are said, to sit in *God's Seat*. And you do answer that, in a diligent and honest Care to maintain and preserve the

the Rights and Properties, the Religion and Manners of Men.

The Eſtates, Honours, and Places of Truſt, that *You* enjoy above other Men, as they give you more Power and Opportunity to do Good, ſo God gave them to you for that very Purpoſe; and will require an Account of your Employment and Improvement of thoſe Talents.

The *Queen's Majeſty*, in whoſe Name and under whoſe Authority you Act, repoſes this Truſt in you. The faithful Diſcharge whereof, does moſt eminently tend to the Honour and Happineſs of Her Government, and to Her Subjects Peace and Safety; to the keeping up the Dignity and Reverence due to *Your* Station and Character, and to your Comfortable and Happy Anſwering your own Oaths and Engagements.

And the Regard you have, to your own Obligations, to the Honour of God and Religion, and to your Church and Countrey's Proſperity, appears in this; That, with Honeſty and Prudence, with Courage and Zeal, ſeparated from any Self-Intereſt, or ſiniſter Deſign, you ſtand up for Piety and Virtue, for ſuppreſſing and rooting up Vice and Iniquity.

This is good, and neceſſary to be done; but not to be done without you. All Human Means and Methods, the Power of the Goſpel, and the Grace of God, will not do, without your Interpoſition and Concurrence. Therefore, we earneſtly pray for you in our Common Liturgy, That *you may have Grace to execute Juſtice, and to maintain Truth.* And again,

gain, That *you may truly and indifferently minister Justice, to the Punishment of Wickedness and Vice, and to the Maintenance of God's true Religion and Virtue.*

THIS, that our Church so frequently and fervently prays for, and I now am bold to put you in mind of, is a *Glorious* Work, *Glorious* in the *Inducements* to, and in the *Performance* of it. You serve your God; you serve your Countrey; and you serve your selves; here in this, and inconceivably much in the next Life, when at the Last and Great *Assize*, God shall come to *Judge* the World, and pronounce to you that blessed Sentence, *Well done, Good and Faithful Servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee Ruler over many things, Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.* And from thenceforth, *for your turning many to Righteousness, you shall shine as Stars, for ever and ever.*

To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Ever-Blessed and Undivided Trinity, be ascrib'd all Praise and Power, Honour and Dominion, now and evermore. *Amen.*

FINIS.